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SUBJECT: IMO: REPORT OF THE 55TH SESSION OF THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SAFETY OF NAVIGATION (NAV) 27-31 JULY 2009

11. SUMMARY: The 55th session of the Subcommittee on Safety of Navigation (NAV S/C) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was held July 27 to 31, 2009, under the chairmanship of Mr. J. M. Sollosi (United States). The session was attended by 64 member governments, 1 associate member government, and 32 United Nations, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The S/C unanimously reelected Mr. J. M. Sollosi as the chairman and reelected Mr. Raja Datuk Malik (Malaysia) as the vice-chairman for 2010. All U.S. objectives were achieved. Major accomplishments of NAV 55 were:

1A. The S/C approved the U.S. proposals to establish an Area to be Avoided (ATBA) and two No Anchoring Areas around the new Neptune Deepwater Port (DWP) off Boston, MA. It also took action on other proposals on routing and reporting consistent with the interests and positions put forth by the U.S.;

1B. The S/C approved a proposal by the IMO Secretary General to endorse the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) in the Gulf of Aden;

1C. The S/C approved a draft SN/Circular on Guidelines for bridge equipment and systems, their arrangement and integration;

1D. The S/C approved a draft Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) resolution on performance standards for Bridge Alert Management;

1E. The S/C approved proposed amendments to Convention on the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulation V/23 and resolution A.889(21) relating to pilot transfer arrangements;

1F. Noting the lack of submissions on the development of guidelines for safety zones greater than 500 meters and the high priority MSC placed on this agenda item, the S/C established a correspondence group, to be chaired by the UK, to prepare a submission for consideration by NAV 56;

1G. The S/C approved a draft SN/Circular on Guidance on the use of Automatic Identification System (AIS) Application-Specific Messages; and

1H. The S/C approved a draft MSC resolution on assuring safety during demonstrations, protests, or confrontations on the high seas. END SUMMARY

ROUTING OF SHIPS, SHIP REPORTING AND RELATED MATTERS

12. In addition to approving the proposed ATBA and the two no anchoring areas around the new Neptune Dep Water Port (DWP) to be established off Boston, MA, the S/C approved several other measures, consistent with, and incorporating the suggested amendments of the U.S. to improve those measures. Additionally, the S/C approved a proposal by the IMO Secretary General to endorse the Internationally Recommended

Transit Corridor (IRTC) in the Gulf of Aden established by military authorities. The S/C also approved issuance of an IMO SN/Circular publicizing the current specifics of the IRTC. It provides military authorities the necessary flexibility to change the IRTC, as necessary. The S/C also drafted an Assembly resolution encouraging member governments to urge their flag ships to follow the IRTC as it may be amended from time to time by navies.

DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR
INTEGRATED BRIDGE SYSTEMS (IBS), INCLUDING
PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR BRIDGE ALERT MANAGEMENT

13. Based primarily on the output of the Correspondence Group chaired by Germany, the S/C finalized for approval by the Committee the draft SN/Circular on Guidelines for the arrangement and integration of bridge equipment and systems. The S/C agreed that these guidelines superseded the existing performance standards for IBS (resolution MSC.64(67)). The S/C noted that the purpose of the alert management specified in the draft performance standards was to enhance the handling, distribution and presentation of alerts on the bridge to enable the bridge team to devote full attention to the safe operation of the ship and to immediately identify any abnormal situation requiring action to maintain the safe operation of the ship. The S/C finalized the draft MSC resolution on performance standards for Bridge Alert Management for adoption by the Committee. The S/C further developed and finalized the draft MSC circular on High-Speed Craft (HSC) Compliance with the provisions of SOLAS regulations V/18-20 for approval by the Committee.

GUIDELINES FOR CONSIDERATION OF REQUESTS FOR
SAFETY ZONES LARGER THAN 500 METERS
AROUND ARTIFICIAL ISLANDS AND STRUCTURES
IN THE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE (EEZ)

14. Because there were no submissions on the development of guidelines for safety zones greater than 500 meters, this agenda item was not referred to the Ships, Routing Working Group and substantive discussion was delayed until NAV 56. Noting the high priority MSC placed on this item and the deadline of 2010, the UK recommended the establishment of a correspondence group to prepare documents for NAV 56. Ten Administrations supported the establishment of a correspondence group. The UK agreed to chair the group.

AMENDMENTS TO THE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR
VOYAGE DATA RECORDERS (VDR) AND
SIMPLIFIED VOYAGE DATA RECORDERS (S-VDR)

15. The United States had submitted a paper proposing that ship's heel angle be recorded as part of the VDR data set. The UK and Germany also submitted a paper that contained a proposal to record heel angle or list, in addition to other proposed amendments. Some members of the technical working group expressed concern that the recording of the heel angle would require a new SOLAS carriage requirement for the sensor needed to capture the data. Others believed, as proposed by the UK and Germany in their paper, that the inclinometer should be an integral part of the VDR. The working group agreed that additional information on electronic inclinometers was needed. It invited interested parties to submit additional information and/or proposals in this area for consideration at NAV 56.

16. A series of proposals in the UK/Germany paper were considered and many were accepted by the working group. Among the proposals accepted were:
-- increasing available data storage in the fixed capsule and internal recording medium, including playback software as part of the performance standard,
-- requiring the internal storage medium to be easily removable in the case of abandonment,
-- increasing the number of required audio tracks, and

-- recording all AIS data.

¶17. Agreement on several proposals could not be reached, and interested parties were invited to submitted additional information and/or proposals for consideration at the next session of NAV. Among the controversial items were the requirement of a float free as well as fixed capsule, possible interface with ECDIS equipment, and recording of electronic logbook information. This work program item is scheduled for two more sessions.

¶18. The working group also considered a proposal from the Republic of Korea to amend SOLAS to require the master to preserve data from an incident. The Technical Working Group could not reach consensus on this proposal, was not able to agree on a recommendation to the sub-committee, and will reconsider it at NAV 56.

DEVELOPMENT OF PROCEDURES FOR UPDATING SHIPBORNE NAVIGATION AND COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

¶19. In view of the increasing complexity of processor-based electronic systems, MSC included in the work programs of NAV and the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR) an item to develop formal procedures to address firmware, operating systems and software updates for shipborne navigation and communications systems and equipment. Having received and considered the Technical Working Groups report, the S/C endorsed the draft MSC circular on Guidance on procedures for updating shipborne navigation and communication equipment for review/comment by COMSAR 14 and a final review by NAV 56 prior to approval by MSC 88.

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION (ITU) MATTERS INCLUDING RADIO COMMUNICATIONS ITU-R STUDY GROUP ISSUES

¶10. The S/C noted the preliminary draft new report ITU-R M. SAT-AIS on Improved satellite detection of AIS and approved the draft liaison statement on the matter to ITU-R and invited the committee to endorse this action. There was prolonged discussion on the current VHF frequencies in use for AIS and future spectrum requirements with respect to e-navigation and spectrum requirements within future maritime systems. The S/C agreed that there was a need to extend the work program items &ITU matters8 and &Radiocommunication ITU-R Study Group matters8 to 2011, as justified by the expected ongoing liaison with ITU on AIS and other issues.

CODE OF CONDUCT DURING DEMONSTRATIONS/CAMPAIGNS AGAINST SHIPS ON THE HIGH SEAS

¶11. The S/C considered the draft MSC resolution it had prepared at NAV 54 and sent to FSI 17 for coordination as directed by MSC. Greenpeace International and the International Whaling Commission (IWC) intervened to express the views of their organizations. Greenpeace had submitted a paper urging the S/C to amend the resolution to add a reference to certain specified human rights instruments, but did not press this position during the session. IWC wanted to inform the Organization of the concern of its member governments on the issue. Japan intervened to advise that, while it had no intention of blocking approval of the draft resolution from going forward to MSC 87, it did intend to work between NAV 55 and MSC 87 (May 2010) to propose language for the preamble to the draft resolution that would reflect the serious concerns of the IWC member governments. After the discussion, the S/C approved the draft MSC resolution prepared by NAV54, as endorsed by FSI 17 without amendment, and submitted it to the Committee for adoption.

MEASURES TO MINIMIZE INCORRECT DATA TRANSMISSIONS BY AIS EQUIPMENT

¶12. The S/C considered a document by Norway proposing a mandatory initial and annual testing of AIS and testing and annual surveys of AIS equipment were made mandatory through SOLAS and/or the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification, 2007 (resolution A.997(25)). After prolonged discussion in which a small minority opposed the Norwegian proposal, the S/C endorsed the draft resolution on proposed draft amendments to the 1974 SOLAS Convention, as amended, proposing a new regulation 18-9 to be added after the existing regulation 18-8 with a view to approval by MSC 87 and adoption by MSC 88.

AN E-NAVIGATION STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

¶13. A working group chaired by Norway was formed to progress the work on the development of an E-Navigation Strategy Implementation Plan. The group refined a preliminary list of user needs and a draft gap analysis. A correspondence group also chaired by Norway, will continue to develop these in preparation for the next meeting of the S/C. The group recognized that a key to a successful E-Navigation strategy is the exchange of information between ships, and between ships and shore-based facilities. In this regard, it was noted that adequate spectrum resources would be necessary for stable broadband HF, VHF, and satellite communication. Other communications technologies were also discussed. The group discussed system architecture as well as cost-benefit and risk analyses, but since there were no new submissions on these subjects, further progress was left to the correspondence group. In addition to reporting to the next session of the S/C, the correspondence group will also report to COMSAR (March 2010) which will also have an E-Navigation Working Group. The definition of e-navigation is still being interpreted differently by different nations. It is seen variously as a system of systems, the system of the future, an integration of existing equipments, a set of standards, a process by which needs are met, a set of specifications for data, and in other ways. This lack of a consistent view needs to be resolved.

GUIDANCE ON THE APPLICATION OF AIS BINARY MESSAGES

¶14. The S/C considered the report of the Correspondence Group established at NAV 54 and agreed to a number of new application specific messages (sent as binary messages). The S/C instructed the Secretariat to consolidate any last-minute editorial changes and clarifications received and finalize the revised draft SN/Circular on the use of AIS Application-Specific Messages for the consideration and approval of the Committee. The S/C endorsed the draft SN/Circular on Guidance for the presentation and display of AIS Application-Specific Messages information for approval by the Committee. The S/C considered the recommended procedure and the draft submission form for the AIS International Application (IA) Catalogue and agreed that the draft submission form could form the basis for an AIS International Application (IA) Catalogue, which the Committee was invited to endorse.

IMPROVED SAFETY OF PILOT TRANSFER ARRANGEMENTS

¶15. The S/C agreed on proposed amendments to SOLAS regulation V/23 relating to pilot transfer arrangements. The significant change to this regulation is that it directs that mechanical pilot hoists not be used. The S/C also agreed on proposed amendments to resolution A.889(21) Recommendation on Pilot Transfer Arrangements. In addition to reinforcing the prohibition on the use of mechanical pilot hoists, the proposed revisions add a breaking strength for side ropes and a provision for easing or cutting back on rubbing bands to accommodate the safe approach of the pilot boat. The S/C additionally agreed on draft proposed revisions, as

consequential amendments to MSC.1/Circ.1331 to ensure consistency with the revisions to SOLAS V/23 and resolution A.889(21).

OTHER BUSINESS

¶16. As a consequence of the comprehensive review of the Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-Keeping (STCW) Convention and Code, the S/C was instructed to review the SOLAS requirement for carriage of a daylight signaling lamp. The S/C was of the view the requirement and consequently the current training requirements in the STCW Convention and Code should be retained. The S/C was also instructed to review Annex IV of the Regulations for Avoiding Collisions at Sea (COLREGS) to determine if a training requirement existed for sending the distress signal SOS by signaling lamp. The S/C agreed that there was still a requirement for distress signal SOS by any signaling means and therefore it would be necessary to maintain the training requirements relating to visual signaling by Morse Code. The S/C was of the view that it was important that mariners had a working knowledge in recognition of Morse Code characters; however, proficiency in the transmission/reception of Morse Code need not be demonstrated.

¶17. The S/C agreed that in light of rapid advancement of technology, it would be appropriate to use a more generic term and that the term &terrestrial electronic positioning fixing systems should replace the terms &Decca and &Loran and instructed the Secretariat to inform STW 41 accordingly.

¶18. The S/C noted with interest an exchange of communications between the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard and the Secretary General of IMO in which the U.S. Government planned to take all necessary measures to maintain the integrity, reliability and availability of the GPS Standard Positioning System (SPS). The USG will provide at least six years notice prior to any termination of GPS operations or elimination of the GPS SPS. When questioned by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) representative about reports of the possibility for GPS outages in the near future, the U.S. delegate responded in detail about the health of the constellation, the number of &on orbit spare satellites and the planned investment for future launches.

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